

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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**1. Name of Property**

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historic name Memorial Gymnasium

other names/site number VDHR#104-0095

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**2. Location**

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street & number 210 S. Emmett Street not for publication           

city or town Charlottesville vicinity           

state Virginia code VA county Independent City code 540 Zip 22903

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**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant        nationally X statewide        locally. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official                      Date

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:        other (explain):                                   

       entered in the National Register

       See continuation sheet.

       determined eligible for the  
National Register

       See continuation sheet.

       determined not eligible for the National Register

       removed from the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**Memorial Gymnasium**  
**City of Charlottesville, VA.**

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private  
☐ public-local  
☒ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

\_\_\_x\_\_\_ building(s)  
 \_\_\_ district  
 \_\_\_ site  
 \_\_\_ structure  
 \_\_\_ object

### Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: Sports facility

[illegible]

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: Sports facility

[illegible]



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**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)☐ Entertainment/Recreation \_\_\_\_\_☐ Architecture \_\_\_\_\_**Period of Significance** ☐ 1924-1953 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates** ☐ 1924 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder** ☐ Kimball, Fiske, et. al. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file** (NPS)☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.☐ previously listed in the National Register☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register☐ designated a National Historic Landmark☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_**Primary Location of Additional Data**☒ State Historic Preservation Office☐ Other State agency☐ Federal agency☐ Local government☐ University☐ OtherName of repository: ☐ Virginia Department of Historic Resources \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** ☐ 5.05 ☐ acres \_\_\_\_\_**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	North	ing	Zone	Easting	North	ing
1	17	718756	4212681		2			
3	_____	_____			4	_____	_____	

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Gwendolyn K. White, intern, University of Virginia School of Architecture

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ date November, 2003

street & number: 437 Monticello Blvd. telephone 703 535 8662

city or town Alexandria state VA zip code 22305

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name University of Virginia

street & number P. O. Box 400726 telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Charlottesville state VA zip code 22904-4726

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**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet**

**Memorial Gymnasium  
City of Charlottesville, VA**

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**7. Summary Description:**

Memorial Gymnasium is situated at the bottom of a steep hill to the west of the original “academical village” of the University of Virginia. The building was constructed in 1924. The use of red brick and classical ornament provides a link to Jefferson’s original complex, but the gymnasium’s style is Beaux Arts Classicism rather than a direct response to Thomas Jefferson’s Roman Revival architecture. In fact it is almost Roman in scale and employs the familiar three-section semi-circular window from the Baths of Diocletian and giant engaged Corinthian columns dividing the main block into five bays. The main part of the building is comprised of a single mass with two lower flanking blocks. Memorial Gymnasium has retained its historic integrity and is in good condition. It continues to be used for its original purpose, serving as the site of intramural sports for University of Virginia students.

**United States Department of the Interior  
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**Memorial Gymnasium  
City of Charlottesville, VA**

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Detailed Description

Memorial Gymnasium is a large rectangular building situated on Emmet Street in Charlottesville to the west of the central grounds of the University of Virginia. It was completed in 1924 and was built to serve as the main site of all indoor athletic classes and games and other gatherings.

The design was influenced by the American Renaissance and University Beautiful movements, which employed classical references. The gymnasium is based roughly on the Roman Baths of Caracalla and Baths of Diocletian with similar massing and rooflines and the use of thermal windows. The building's style is predominantly Beaux Arts Classicism. The central block has a low-pitched roof, but the two flanking blocks have flat roofs surrounded by a balustrade that alternates brick piers and white-painted classical wooden balusters. The entire building is built of brick in five course common bond with a belt course of contrasting light colored stone between the first and second floors. The gymnasium has three levels, but is built into a slope so that on the north and west sides only the top two stories are visible.

The main entrance to the gymnasium is located on the north façade and features a two-story portico that protrudes from the main building. The portico shelters three double doorways capped with cornices. Six Ionic columns support the portico. A plaque to the right of the entrances states "This building erected in 1924 is a memorial to the alumni of the University of Virginia who lost their lives in the World War 1914 – 1918."

The east elevation has engaged Corinthian columns framing its five bays in contrast to the pilasters on the west elevation. These rest on a first-floor podium. On the first level, each bay has brick pilasters dividing the space into three sections, each containing a tall narrow window with Roman lattice glazing. Above the pilasters in each bay is an entablature that serves as the base for a giant thermal window ornamented with a large central keystone. The thermal windows each project into a triangular gable. On the west façade, the end bays each have sets of three doors (instead of narrow windows) that allow access to the gymnasium from the street.

The south end of the building, which holds the swimming pool, has no exterior entrances. All three levels of this section have eight windows across the end façade. The two lower levels have frosted glass panes. Only the middle level windows have cornice caps.

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City of Charlottesville, VA**

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The main entrance to the interior is reached through the three double doors sheltered by the north portico. A one-story entrance hall opens into a two-story hall with double stairs leading to the top floor that contains offices. Directly straight ahead from the entrance is the basketball court. The gabled wooden ceiling has metal truss supports. An open gallery area above the basketball court holds a wooden indoor lap-track. To the left of the entrance is a row of offices reached through a doorway. To the right is a small exercise room.

The ground level of the gymnasium now holds the weight room and swimming pool. Squash courts originally were in the space now occupied by the weight room and the dividers for each court are still visible on the wall.



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**Summary Statement of Significance**

The Memorial Gymnasium, affectionately called "Mem Gym," was built to replace Fayerweather Hall in response to an increase in enrollment following World War I. The building reflects the trends in architecture at the time of its construction in 1924. McKim, Meade and White had constructed buildings at the south end of the Lawn of the University of Virginia in the late nineteenth century, which completed that area of the grounds. Fiske Kimball's design for the gymnasium more closely followed their lead in building classically detailed buildings that were not an attempt to be academic versions of ancient classical structures. In the early twentieth century, an Architectural Commission was formed at the University of Virginia to provide control over the design of all university buildings. While Kimball is generally credited with the design of Memorial Gymnasium, the work was actually the collaboration of a group of architects with Kimball serving as supervising architect. The other architects on the committee were Walter Dabney Blair, John Kevan Peebles, and R.E. Lee Taylor. This building is the most ambitious result of that very fruitful coalition.

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**Memorial Gymnasium  
City of Charlottesville, VA**

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Historical Background

Memorial Gymnasium was constructed to replace Fayerweather Hall, completed in 1893. The rapidly increasing student body had already outgrown the facility as the university's expansion over the preceding decades necessitated larger accommodations for athletic events. Memorial Gymnasium was erected 1921-1924 in memory of the 2,700 students and alumni of the university who lost their lives in World War I. The cost of construction was \$300,000. One third of the funds came from the Commonwealth of Virginia. The president of the university, Edwin A. Alderman, raised an additional \$100,000, and students contributed the remaining balance. During the Alderman's tenure, an Architectural Commission was assembled to design all new structures for the campus to provide architectural continuity. Fiske Kimball, professor of art and architecture at the university from 1919-1923, served as supervising architect for the group on construction of the gymnasium, which also included Walter Dabney Blair, John Kevan Peebles, and R.E. Lee Taylor.

A large reflecting pool that ran the entire length of the east side of the building was used as an ice skating rink in the winter. The pool was drained in 1952 and filled in.

Few changes have been made to the gymnasium since its construction. A weight room has replaced courts on the first level.

There was no formal dedication ceremony for the gymnasium but it was officially opened in 1924 with a basketball game between the University of Virginia and Randolph Macon. At the time of its construction, Memorial Gymnasium was the third largest on the East coast. It continued as the site of all basketball games until University Hall was constructed in 1965. In addition to its intended purpose, it has been used for countless other functions including concerts, dances, mass meetings, and University registration. It is now used for intramural sports and as a recreational facility for the University of Virginia community.

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**Memorial Gymnasium  
City of Charlottesville, VA**

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**Bibliography:**

Dabney, Virginius. *Mr. Jefferson's University: A History*, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981.

O'Neal, William B. *Pictorial History of the University of Virginia*, Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1976.

Wilson, Richard Guy and Sara A. Butler. *The Campus Guide: University of Virginia*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property being nominated (a 5.05-acre parcel) is designated as parcel number 076A0-000 D0 on the tax maps for Albemarle County, Virginia.

**Boundary Justification**

The property being nominated includes only the historic building known as Memorial Gymnasium.

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**Memorial Gymnasium  
City of Charlottesville, VA**

**Section** Photo List **Page** 7

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The following information is the same for all photographs:

Name of Property: Memorial Gymnasium

Location of Property: Albemarle County, VA

Date of Photographs: September 2003

Negative Number: 21005 (photos 1-5) No.: 21004 (photos 6-7)

Photographer: Gwendolyn White

Photographs Filed: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

Photograph 1 of 7

View: North façade

Photograph 2 of 7

View: East façade

Photograph 3 of 7

View: East façade

Photograph 4 of 7

View: West façade

Photograph 5 of 7

View: Typical column east façade

Photograph 6 of 7

View: Gymnasium

Photograph 7 of 7

View: Swimming Pool